

## **Student Attendance Policy and Procedure**

### **Purpose**

Good attendance at school is one of the keys of effective student learning. A poor attendance record correlates with poor academic achievement.

The purpose of this policy is to establish student attendance requirements and procedures.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education stipulates 180 days of instruction as the academic year. Attendance is compulsory from the second term, which starts in January of each calendar year. Private school students must attend classes according to the academic calendar of each school, with January 10 normally being the latest start date to record attendance.

The Ministry of Education also sets guidelines for the length of the school day, and every private school interprets these according to its own educational program.

Students are expected to attend school on every instructional day in the school calendar. Good attendance at school is essential for student learning. It is the duty of parents/guardians, teachers and all other school staff to ensure that students attend school every day.

The school records attendance and takes action for those students who consistently fail to attend school.

### **Definition of Excused and Unexcused Absences:**

#### **Excused Absence:**

A student's absence from school will be considered excused only for the following reasons:

- Personal illness.
- Scheduled doctor appointment.
- Death of a first or second degree family member (up to 3 days).
- Official school or community duty as assigned by a government agency.
- Official summons to a government agency.
- Family travel in order to accompany a first degree family member for treatment abroad for up to 30 days (the period may be extended by application to the school).

Excused absences must be confirmed by parents/guardians in a signed note and accompanied with appropriate documentation where possible (e.g. medical certificate).



# NORTHVIEW INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

LEARNING TOGETHER TO CREATE A BETTER WORLD

## **Unexcused Absences:**

A student's absence from school for more than half of the school day without the provision of a valid excuse is considered an unexcused absence. For information on school day hours, please refer to the school's Events Calendar.

- Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:
- Shopping trips Appointments without prior approval Social events
- Non-medical family travel

## **Truancy**

Students are considered truant if they are absent from school without their parent/guardians' knowledge or consent. Truancy is considered an unexcused absence. Schools will give written notice to parents/guardians when their child has been truant. Issues of repeated truancy will require the parents/guardians to meet with school officials in accordance with the parents' signed undertaking.

## **Attendance Procedure:**

All schools will establish attendance procedures designed to ensure that all students who are officially enrolled attend school on time each day and attend all classes.

Accurate daily attendance data for each student is collected before or during the first lesson of the school day and entered into the schools' Management Information System before the end of the second lesson of the school day. This shall include entry of data provided by parents/guardians regarding students' absences.

If a student accumulates repeated unexcused absences during one school term amounting to a 95% or below attendance rate, they shall be referred to their Academic Lead for action.

All issues of students with repeated unexcused absences are directed to the Principal for resolution. The Principal may direct the Head of Academics or other school-based staff to address the issue with parents/guardians.

The school's Behavior for Learning Procedure will include procedures for managing unexcused student absences, including part-day unexcused absences from lessons and school events.

## **Programs to Encourage Attendance:**

Schools will seek to achieve high student attendance through the following initiatives:

- Providing a safe, caring and engaging learning environment that promotes student engagement.
- Establishing programs and procedures to promote, encourage and reward good attendance.



# NORTHVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

LEARNING TOGETHER TO CREATE A BETTER WORLD

- Implementing strategies and programs to address attendance problems for individual students.
- Providing clear and specific information and advice to parents about the benefits of high attendance and informing the school community of the rules and consequences of poor attendance.

### **Communication:**

All schools will communicate to families the set of responsibilities that parents/guardians have regarding student attendance. Parents' responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Making every effort to ensure that their child attends school every day and arrives on time.
- Informing the school if their child will be absent from school.
- Providing a signed note when their child returns to school following an absence, indicating the reason for their child's absence.
- Scheduling family vacations to coincide with scheduled school breaks.

### **Maximizing Instructional Time:**

In order to maximize instructional time, schools should monitor the amount of time students are diverted away from scheduled classroom learning activities to participate in preparations for celebrations and school-organized festivities. Typically, no student should spend more than a total of 3 to 4 days in a year on such preparatory activities.

### **Consequences of Absences:**

- **Missing Assessments:** If a student misses an external test or examination due to an unexcused absence, credit will not be awarded for the missed test or examination and this will impact the final mark/letter accordingly.
- **Missing Assignments:** Students are responsible for completing all assignments missed during absences.
- **Unexcused absence:** if a student misses over 10 unexcused absences during a school year, an intervention program to improve attendance, developed in consultation with the parents and which includes regular ongoing communication with parents, will be put in place.
- **Repeated absence amounting to truancy:** Formal interview with Principal and Parents: If a student accumulates 20 unexcused absences during one school year, the student and their parents/guardians must attend an interview with the Principal.



# NORTHVIEW

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

LEARNING TOGETHER TO CREATE A BETTER WORLD

- The school will also inform the Ministry of Education and Higher Education that the student's place is at risk.

### **Student progression:**

- If a student accumulates 20 unexcused absences during one school year, and the school has informed the Ministry of Education and Higher Education that the student's place is at risk, then a disciplinary committee can pass a recommendation that the student be retained in the same grade the following year.
- If the student is 16 or younger and has already been retained twice previously, then they must be promoted to the next grade, with support from an ongoing intervention plan.
- If the student is older than 16 and has already been retained twice previously then they shall not be registered for the following year and shall be recommended for homeschooling.

### **Related documents:**

Parent undertaking

School attendance register

Blended Learning policy